PANURGICS.

No. 1.

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ENOCH, or IDRIS.

and

DEATH.

By Judson D. Davidson. (Pentitell)

For this, save faults in how it's told,
Amenable the Moslems hold.

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ENOCH, OR IDRIS, AND DEATH.

One, ancient, venerable, bald,
Was by his kith and kindred called
'Enoch', —because that was his name,
And 'Idris' also, which word came
By derivation from "darasa"
Which means 'to read': for, lore t'amass, age
Old Idris studied hard; his thumb
Completely callous had become
From handling tomes of old tradition
Of 'Adam's authorized edition'.
So good he grew, that Allah made
A Prophet out of him: —and Trade
The cheat-eschewing balance owes
To his inventive skill; for those
Depraved descendants of old Cain
He taught to shun ill-gotten gain.
And if some sceptics dared dispute
The doctrine Duty bid him bruit,
So outraged oft felt pious Enoch,
Their heads off with a mace would HE knock.
But Idris longed to emigrate
Out of this earthly semi-state
Of grace and grief, into aerial
Paradise's climes etherial.
Paternal Allah wished to test
His fitness for eternal rest:
So He the All-Devourer sent
To try if he could win consent
From th' aged sage to some transaction
Of upright justice an infraction.

Dread Death assumed a virgin's shape
Voluptuous: soft flesh to drape
His hideous skeleton, he donned:—
From dark dilating eyes shot fond
35 Love-igniting glances:—confess
Such orbs deep wells of willingness.
This fair fraud unto Idris told
A tale of how a wicked bold
Young seed-of-Cain her only sister
40 Had abducted.—Soon enlist her
Sex his soft heart that hath male eyes;
Few look for guile 'neath such a guise:
Enoch no urging needed: bold
For the rescue, at once he told
45 The damsel "Lead the way." She led.
Their way was westward, for she said
The youth in that direction went.
They over arid deserts bent
Their toilsome course: too righteous he
50 Even to glance at her as she
Led on, with graceful gliding gait.
Silent marched Enoch, grim as Fate.
At night she pitched her tent: then she
With hearty hospitality,
55 Asked him in, to share its shelter
For the night.
Was tuned to melt, her
Low, winning, soft, melodious tone;
Yet he refused, and lay alone
Upon the rough, hard, stoney ground.
60 But first, with voice of gutteral sound,
He asked, "Got any grub?" She shook
Her handsome head; but bid him look
Behind him; there, alone, a lamb
Was lying, lost from careless dam:

He said, "It is some shepherd's sheep:
"I'd rather starve than steal!"—
So sleep
These two apart, and supperless.
Through wilderness all waterless
Next day while wandering on, they found
A skin of water on the ground:
She kindly offered him a drink:—
He curtly asked her, 'Did she think
'He drank other people's water?'
Then he labored till he got her
To seem to comprehend, 'Some wight
'Luckless had lost it;—likely might
Be along looking for it soon.'
That evening, almost fit to swoon
From hunger, thirst, and weariness,
He yet preferred the dreariness
Of dark and lonesome all out-'doors,
To Beauty's bed;—though really bores
Him, her alluring coaxing smiles,
And wanton, winning, woman wiles.
His continence so Allah pleased,
That gushed out,—like a mandrake squeezed,
A spring of water, cool, and clear,
From sand-heap unto Enoch near;
And by his head, up grew a palm
Instanter!—
Idris hummed a psalm:
Regaled himself on dates and drink;
And then,—when full,—began to think
Of his companion, frail, and fair:
He called aloud, "Come out, and share
"The bounty of Allah,"———then hid
Behind the tree, for fear the lid
Of either eye should prove in league
With that gay temptress to intrigue.

When, after waiting quite a while,
100 She came not forth, he muttered, "I'll
"Go in, and wake her; lest, perchance,
"Fatigued, she may be in a trance."
Raising the canvas,—peeping in,
He saw a sight that made his thin
105 Hair curl!—but quickly veiled his face,
And murmured, "Allah grant me grace!"
And then he lifted up his voice,
And asked, "Who art thou, that from choice
"Persistest in thy fast, though now
110 "The third day dawns wherein hast thou
"Not tasted food, nor drink?—and yet
"Thy form is full,—though not thick-set,
"Thou art as plump, as round, as fair,
"As she that floods the midnight air
115 "With liquid light,—the Moon,—when she
"Hath shone for fourteen nights!"
To see
There was no chance to win this sage,
Death was not slow; to disengage
Himself from mortal mask, not long
120 Employed his power:—
"Know,—Man, whom wrong
"Defiles not,—I am Death! Now ask
"One favor from me,—set one task,—
"It shall be done." The Angel spoke,
And from his nostril burst attesting smoke!
125 Enoch remarked, "I've often thought
"I'd like to travel":—then besought
This Angel kind, to let him see
All foreign climes;—"But where shall we
"Go first?"—he queried. "Go to Hell?"
130 Suggested Death. Said Idris, "Well."—

Then thither hied this twain; and peered
Over the edge of the high wall, reared
The infernal Pit-of-torment round;—
Of fire-proof brick was built this bound;
Soon Enoch wearied watching woe:
So Death said, "Upward shall we go?"—
Under one wing did Death tuck Idris,
And fly away.
"Odd way to ride, this!"
The almost breathless Prophet thought.
Whilst yet he thought it, Lo! he caught
A glimpse of Heaven!
Down Death set
Him at the gate:—
But would not let
Poor Enoch enter, porters gruff,
They say 'his word is not enough';—
Of Registration of his death,
Voucher demands Ambrosial-breath!
But angels, teetering on a tree
Whose branches reached out near where he
Was standing, slyly tipped the wink:
He grabbed the twigs, and o'er the brink
Of Heaven's hedge of twined sweet-briar,
Was jerked to join that joyous choir!
The porters stared; Death turned and fled;
And angels apples unto Idris fed.

NOTES.

1. Panurge, Junior, who wrote it, claims that this poem ought to be a good one, since it was begun on a Sunday, (31st July, 1881, and finished the day following.) Not only so, but a large part of it was composed in a Church in Panurge's native village, Rogue's Hollow, near The Humbug, Bay of Plenty, Yahoolaland. Nor is that yet all; it was being composed even while the preacher was delivering his prolonged and somewhat ponderous sermon.

To the question, what was the reason he had waited nearly twenty-five years before printing it, he replied, "Oh, bashfulness; besides, I lacked wherewithal to pay the printer."

2. Line 113-116: Confer Dryden's "Tempest." Act II. Scene I.

Caliban..... "My lovely sister, beautiful and bright as the Full Moon."

3. Line 135. "Soon Enoch wearied watching woe": cf. Lucian, "The True History": "Not able to bear longer such melancholy spectacles."

4. Line 146. "Of Registration of his death Voucher demands Ambrosial-breath": cf. Dr. Garth's "Dispensary": Canto V. l. 13-14,

"None e'er could die with due solemnity,
Unless his passport first was signed by me."

Also, Toronto Evening Telegram, Nov., '93:

"Rev. G. Furness Smith, addressing the Younger "Clergy Union in England, said that the Turkish "authorities at Constantinople refused to allow the "circulation of the Epistle to the Galatians, supposing "that it was a letter addressed to the people of Galata, "a suburb of Constantinople. When corrected on "this point, to make sure, they demanded the certificate "of St. Paul's death."

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God send
You health
To-morrow,
With wealth
Of joy, and minimum of sorrow.

THE END.